

United States of America to the Republic of Fiji, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of Nauru, the Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON YAMATE NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Robert T. Yamate, of California, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Madagascar, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Union of the Comoros?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SISON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michele Jeanne Sison, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, with the rank and status of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, and the Deputy Representative of the United States of America in the Security Council of the United Nations?

The nomination was confirmed.

VOTE ON SISON NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the nomination of Michele Jeanne Sison, of Maryland, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Career Minister, to be Representative of the United States of America to the Sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations, during her tenure of service as Deputy Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations?

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

LEGISLATION SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

Mr. REID. I express my appreciation to the Senator from Iowa for joining me.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that following the vote

on confirmation of Executive Calendar No. 1034, the Senate consider Calendar Nos. 955, 1054, 639, 641, 999, 998, 1028, 953, 696, 540, and 962; that there be 2 minutes of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees, prior to each vote; that upon the use or yielding back of time the Senate proceed to vote without intervening action or debate on the nominations in the order listed; that any rollcall votes, following the first in the series, be 10 minutes in length; that if any nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. For the information of all Senators, we expect these votes to be such that we can confirm them by voice vote.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO BILL SCHWERI

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a friend of mine and a great friend to the Bluegrass State and the University of Kentucky, Mr. Bill Schweri. Bill recently retired from the University of Kentucky after dedicating over 40 years to working at the university, the last two decades of which were spent as the director of Federal relations.

It has been Bill's job to serve as a liaison between the university and its faculty and the executive and legislative branches of State and Federal Government. I am a proud graduate of UK's College of Law, and Bill has represented my alma mater exceedingly well over the years.

Bill has been a staunch advocate for new research initiatives at the university in fields as varied as agriculture, biotechnology, clean coal technology, energy, engineering, and transportation. He has helped transform UK into one of the most prominent economic drivers in the State.

He has been instrumental in bringing about such UK achievements as the Marty Driesler Cancer Project, the expansion of a teaching space in the College of Nursing, the creation of a bioinformatics core in the university's medical center, and Fedtrak, a project with the Transportation Security Administration to track sensitive material shipments.

Bill also played a key role in UK's Markey Cancer Center being awarded a National Cancer Institute designation. With NCI designation, UK is better positioned to recruit researchers, receive grants, and to develop new breakthrough treatments to lead the fight against cancer. This means that fewer Kentuckians will have to travel out of State to find the most advanced care and clinical trials, and instead will be able to find it within the Commonwealth, which is critical as Kentucky suffers from the highest combined cancer mortality rate in the country.

Bill has worked actively to help maintain congressional support for student financial aid, which is so important to many Kentucky students. He has worked tirelessly to ensure his school's visibility here in Washington, DC and to fight for legislation that is important to UK. And he is fiercely loyal to the University of Kentucky.

Bill is not just an employee of UK, he's also an alumnus. Bill earned his bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Kentucky in 1969 and his master's degree, also in anthropology, from UK in 1978.

In his youth he served in the Peace Corps in Guatemala, and he also served as the past president of the Society of Research Administrators, International from 1997 to 1998. Bill previously served as UK's director of sponsored program development in the 1980s and '90s before becoming the director of Federal relations in July of 1994.

Bill has been a leader in the Science Coalition, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of more than 50 of the Nation's leading research universities dedicated to sustaining the Federal Government's investment in scientific research. He has also been actively involved in the Council on Governmental Affairs of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities.

Bill is well known and highly respected among his colleagues in Federal relations at other research universities, just as he is throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I wish to personally thank Bill for his service to the University of Kentucky and to our State. Although his retirement is well earned, he will certainly be missed, by me, by my staff, and by the many people across Kentucky who have benefited from his efforts. I ask my U.S. Senate colleagues to join me in bidding a fond farewell to Mr. Bill Schweri.

LETTERS IN RELATION TO RESIGNATION

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD letters related to my resignation as a Member of the U.S. Senate.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
November 12, 2014.

Hon. JOSEPH R. BIDEN,
President of the U.S. Senate.

DEAR VICE PRESIDENT BIDEN, please find the attached document officially notifying Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin of my intent to resign my Senate seat on January 3, 2015. I further note that my resignation will be effective at 11:59 AM on that date.

Thank you for your service to our nation.
Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.

U.S. SENATE,
January 17, 2014.

Governor MARY FALLIN,
Oklahoma City, OK.

DEAR GOVERNOR FALLIN, serving as Oklahoma's senator has been, and continues to be, one of the great privileges and blessings of my life. But, after much prayer and consideration, I have decided that I will leave the Senate before the end of my term.

I am therefore resigning my Senate seat effective January 3, 2015. I am giving you substantial advance notice with the hope that you will be able to schedule a special election concurrent with the existing election schedule and not impose any undue burden on Oklahoma taxpayers.

Thank you for your service to our great state.

Sincerely,

TOM A. COBURN, M.D.

REMEMBERING PHILIP CRANE

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, Illinois lost its longest-serving Member of the House of Representatives and this country lost one of the great leaders of the conservative movement last week when Philip Crane passed away at the age of 84.

For 35 years Phil Crane represented Chicago's northwest suburbs, a region I know well. He was first elected to Congress in 1969, winning a special election, and ultimately became the longest-serving House Republican when he was finally defeated in 2004. While I served with Congressman Phil Crane in the House of only 4 years, our districts were adjacent to each other and together we fought for many issues important to suburban Chicago and Illinois.

Before conservative principles were fashionable, Phil was leading the way for conservatism, working for Barry Goldwater in 1964 in Illinois. When some said Phil's politics of small government and low taxes were backward looking, he responded with gusto, arguing in support of free markets and trade, prudent economics policies, a strong national defense, and traditional values.

Phil was courageous and had foresight. In 1976 he was the first sitting Congressman to publicly support Reagan in his effort to defeat President Gerald Ford. He also founded the Republican Study Committee, which still exists today in the House of Representatives. He also was deeply involved in the early days of two of the most influential conservative think tanks, the Heritage Foundation and the American Conservative Union.

In 1980 Phil took a run for President, ultimately falling to Ronald Reagan.

As a young House staffer, I noted that numerous Congressmen respected Phil for his early advocacy of conservative principles and his ties to the early days of the modern conservative movement. If you want to get a feel of Phil, then read his 1976 book "The Sum of Good Government."

Phil Crane fought tirelessly as a senior member of the House Ways and Means Committee for his conservative principles, including for lower taxes and increasing trade. One of his greatest legislative achievements was the North American Free Trade Agreement, which created the world's largest free trade zone, linking up billions of dollars annually.

With the passing of Phil Crane, Illinois and Washington have lost one of its greats. Thank you, Phil Crane, for your service to the State of Illinois and to our country.

CONGRATULATING JOHN COX

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I wish to recognize and congratulate John Cox the Director of the Wyoming Department of Transportation. On November 24, 2014, Director Cox will be elected as president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, AASHTO. John is currently serving as the association's vice-president and has worked his way to the top through various positions in AASHTO.

Since 2005, he has continually served Wyoming as the WYDOT director. The respect for John is deep and widespread. He was appointed by Democrat Governor Dave Freudenthal and reappointed by our current Republican Governor Matt Mead.

John Cox is not your traditional State Department of Transportation director. Director Cox has a 28-year background in law enforcement. As a young patrolman, John patrolled thousands of miles on the rural roads of Wyoming. Director Cox's law enforcement background provided him with a unique perspective on the needs of rural States like Wyoming. John understands rural transportation. He also understands that our transportation system must be whole. I believe his experience and leadership will be key to the success of AASHTO and its members over the next year.

Director Cox and I have worked closely together for over a decade. When I was in the Wyoming Legislature, I chaired the Senate Transportation and Military Affairs Committee. In the Wyoming Legislature, we worked to improve our State's highways. In the U.S. Senate, we worked on the 2012 highway reauthorization bill. In 2014, Director Cox and I focused on improving the current law by cutting Washington redtape and providing flexibility and equity for rural States like Wyoming.

I look forward to continuing to work with Director Cox as all of America can now benefit from his leadership.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JOHN R. BALLENTINE

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, I wish to honor John R. Ballentine, who will retire as the Alma City Mayor after more than two decades of public service to the citizens of Arkansas in this elected position.

As Alma City Mayor, John was a constant advocate for services, programs and improvements for Alma residents. After leading the city out of debt, John oversaw the construction and financing of the city's first waterpark. In 2000, John opened the Alma Aquatic Center, which has become a centerpiece of the city bringing in more than 50,000 people annually. What started as an idea dreamed up while baling hay became a significant contributor to the City of Alma's economy.

John fought hard to enhance existing public facilities and finance the new construction of amenities including area parks, a \$4 million water treatment plant, an annual Independence Day fireworks show, and the annual Alma flying disk golf tournament which brings in over 100 participants every November.

John's passion for public service extends beyond his most recent position as Alma's longest standing mayor since 1872. In addition, John served on the Alma City Council for 4 years, as a member of the Crawford County Quorum Court for 10 years, and in the U.S. Army Reserves for 21 years.

I congratulate John for his commitment to public service. We are all grateful for his years of service and leadership to Alma, Crawford County and Arkansas. John is truly a public servant. I wish him continued success in his future endeavors.●

CONGRATULATING THE STAMFORD JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

• Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Stamford Jewish Community Center for being the 2014 S.T.R.I.V.E., Sports Teach Respect Initiative Values and Excellence, Organization of the Year. Each year the National Council of Youth Sports, NCYS, recognizes five finalist organizations that most meet the "kids first" approach, evidenced by their implementation of best practices and policies that protect kids and promote safety. Those five finalist organizations are then put on the NCYS website for voting by the public. The award, sponsored by AIG, is presented to organizations that exhibit heartfelt passion and show a committed spirit to helping kids succeed in sports, while maintaining a commitment to safety procedures.

Since opening its doors in 1916, the Stamford JCC has become a valuable community resource, especially well-known for its continuum of safe, supportive, and inclusive health and fitness programs for children and youth